

Message Text

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PAGE 01 AMMAN 04357 141357Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----101382 141402Z /72
O 141334Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6102

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4357

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR
SUBJECT: RUMOR OF ENGAGEMENT OF KING HUSSEIN

1. RUMOR SURFACED FOR FIRST TIME TODAY IN AMMAN FROM FAIRLY
KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES THAT KING HUSSEIN INTENDS TO MARRY LISA
HALABY, DAUGHTER OF NAJEEB HALABY, FORMER HEAD OF PAN AMERICAN
AIRWAYS AND FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT KING HUSSEIN HAS ALREADY STARTED
TO RECEIVE CONGRATULATIONS FROM JORDAN ARMY. WE DO NOT
KNOW WHEN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE, BUT GIVEN
RUMOR MILL IN AMMAN, WE EXPECT TOWN IS ALREADY BUZZING
WITH THE NEWS. LOGICAL TIME FOR ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE
AROUND MAY 25 JOYDAN ARMED FORCES DAY.

3. MISS HALABY HAS BEEN SEEN IN AMMAN OFF AND ON FOR
OVER A YEAR, WHERE HER FATHER HAS AN INTEREST IN AN
AMMAN-BASED REGIONAL ARAB AIR SERVICE.

4. NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, KING DID NOT MENTION SUBJECT
DURING MEETING WITH ME TODAY AND I OF COURSE DID
NOT RAISE IT WITH HIM. KING'S GENERAL STYLE IS
TO ALLOW RUMORS TO CIRCULATE FOR A PERIOD BEFORE
MAKING FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT, PARTLY TO TEST PUBLIC
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PAGE 02 AMMAN 04357 141357Z

REACTION.

5. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE PUBLIC
REACTION TO THE RUMOR. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER,
JORDANIANS HAVE NOW GROWN USED TO KING'S PREFERENCE
FOR FOREIGN OR AT LEAST WESTERNIZED WOMEN, AFTER HIS
PREVIOUS MARRIAGES TO AN EGYPTIAN, A BRITISHER AND

THE U.S.-EDUCATED LATE QUEEN ALIA.

6. SINCE ENGAGEMENT IS STILL IN RUMOR STAGE WITH NO
OFFICIAL ATTRIBUTION, WE HOPE DEPARTMENT CAN AVOID
ANY COMMENT OR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.

SUDDARTH

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Message Attributes

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